

Social Dynamics of AI Support in Creative Writing

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Abstract

Recently, large language models have made huge advances in generating coherent, creative text. While much research focuses on how users can interact with language models, less work considers the social-technical gap that this technology poses. What are the social nuances that underlie receiving support from a generative AI? In this work we ask when and why a creative writer might turn to a computer versus a peer or mentor for support. We interview 20 creative writers about their writing practice and their attitudes towards both human and computer support. We discover three elements that govern a writer's interaction with support actors: 1) what writers desire help with, 2) how writers perceive potential support actors, and 3) the values writers hold. We align our results with existing frameworks of writing cognition and creativity support, uncovering the social dynamics which modulate user responses to generative technologies.